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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
23 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 70  
(as of 0630 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. Both Israel and Egypt announced this morning that the cease-fire in the Suez Canal area had been put aside and that fighting would be resumed in response to provocations by the other side. Action this morning appears to be concentrated in the southern part of the canal's west bank near the city of Suez where the Israelis had last claimed to have made advances.

2. Fighting continues on the Syrian front this morning with Israeli forces concentrating on the Mount Hermon area. The Syrians had not stated that they would go along with a cease-fire, and Israeli spokesmen had stated that fighting would continue in this area.

EGYPTIAN FRONT

3. Israeli spokesmen said early this morning that continued Egyptian violations of the cease-fire had forced a return to battle. Cairo likewise claimed

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that Israeli troops had used the night to push forward and occupy "some positions between our forces, especially on the western side of the canal," and to use "its air force to strafe our forces."

4. There have been reports of continued fighting on the Egyptian front since the brief respite shortly before and after the cease-fire was to go into effect yesterday. At nightfall Tel Aviv claimed that the Egyptians were shelling Israeli positions near Ismailia about an hour after the time the cease-fire was implemented. Later the Israelis said that the Egyptians were using "all sorts of weapons" along most sectors of the canal. In summing up the night's activity before they announced the resumption of fighting, Israeli spokesmen said that there were many clashes, with the Egyptians firing on the Israelis that were reorganizing. The shooting reportedly quieted down toward the end of the night but did not cease completely.

5. An Israeli military spokesman, after the resumption of fighting, said that the battle had begun around the city of Suez at the southern end of the canal and that the Israeli troops northwest of the city had been told to respond.

6. An accidental reopening of the fighting could come from troops moving around or regrouping in the dark, but the fixing of the area of violation near the city of Suez points to the area that is the most crucial to the military positions of both sides. The Israelis claim substantial gains in yesterday's fighting in this area, putting their forces at Shallufa on the outskirts of Suez city. The spokesman stated that the Israeli goals were to push through to the Gulf of Suez before the cease-fire was implemented, giving them control of the entire southern half of the west bank from Ismailia to the Gulf of Suez. By the end of the day, however, Israeli spokesmen claimed to have only advanced about 3 miles south of Shallufa.

7. Any further advances in this area would be crucial to the interests of both sides. Israeli control of the entire southern part of the west bank would effectively cut off the Egyptian bridgehead on the southern east bank from any reinforcement or resupply. The Israelis previously claim to be able to shell the road leading to Suez--interdicting the Egyptian line of communication. The Israelis claimed that the Egyptians had built 3 additional bridges, for a total of six, across the canal in the southern sector to be used either for withdrawal or last minute reinforcement.

8. Israeli air activity has reflected both the earlier implementation of the cease-fire and the return to fighting. After the cease-fire, air activity tapered off and mainly consisted of helicopter flights from bases in Sinai to the west bank, apparently for medical evacuation. Fighter planes flew air cover for these helicopters. Little activity was detected over the evening except for a small number of reconnaissance missions and defensive fighter patrols.

9. At dawn the Israelis began flying ground attack missions in raids of up to 20 aircraft in the area where their forces are engaged on the west bank. In contrast to previous air activity, the Israelis did not concentrate on Port Suez, Egyptian forces on the east bank, or Egyptian airfields in the interior. Egyptian air activity remains light, as it has generally been throughout the war, with morning activity limited to defensive fighter patrols around their airfields.

#### SYRIAN FRONT

11. Some fighting continues on the Syrian front this morning, with Israeli Skyhawks conducting air

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strikes on ground targets in the vicinity of Mount Hermon, along the Syrian and Lebanese border. A Syrian military spokesman claimed that the Israelis strafed and shelled two villages there with aircraft and artillery. According to the Damascus Middle East News Agency, air raid sirens sounded as heavy explosions were heard and planes were seen in the skies of the Syrian capital.

12. In other air activity, a Syrian MIG-21 was shot down in an air engagement between Syrian and Israeli aircraft--also in the vicinity of Mount Hermon. Two Israeli Phantoms were shot down by Syrian surface-to-air missiles this morning on the Golan Heights near Rafid, according to a UN observer.

13. [REDACTED] 25X1  
had received no reports of military ground action along the Syrian front as of 0800 local time (0600Z), some thirteen hours after the start of the cease-fire. Observers acknowledged, however, that it was possible that firing at the deepest points of Israeli penetration into Syria might not be detected.

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14. The Israelis claim that Palestinian guerrillas in southern Lebanon intensified their rocket and mortar attacks on settlements in northern Israel last night. Eleven settlements were hit, causing property damage but no casualties. Israeli forces returned the fire. Palestinian commandos acknowledged today that they had attacked Israeli positions in defiance of the UN Security Council cease-fire call. Earlier last night [REDACTED] 25X1  
reported exchanges of artillery, rocket, mortar, and machine gun fire between the Israelis and the guerrillas along the Israeli and Lebanese border.

#### SOVIET AIRLIFT

15. [REDACTED] Soviet transport aircraft flew to the Middle East [REDACTED] 25X1

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[redacted] 48 AN-12 flights, [redacted] went to Egypt, [redacted] to Syria, and [redacted] to Iraq. [redacted] AN-22s also arrived in Cairo.

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### SOVIET SEALIFT

17. Since 7 October, 26 suspected Soviet arms carriers have left Black Sea ports for the Middle East with an estimated 63,000 tons of cargo.

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### ISRAEL

18. Jerusalem Radio carried a report that during Secretary Kissinger's talks in Moscow he rejected a Soviet demand that the Security Council resolution include a call for an Israeli withdrawal, in stages, to the borders that existed before June 1967. The Israeli report also said that the US has made it clear to Israel that it favors Israeli forces remaining in their places.

19. Military analyst Hayyim Herzog says that the evolution of the Middle East conflict "shattered" two Soviet illusions:

--That an unlimited quantity of sophisticated and heavy arms would eventually obviate the qualitative gap between the Arab armies and the IDF,

--That the US would not react as "sharply as it did" to the Soviet arms shipments to the Arabs.

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EGYPT

20. Al-Ahram in its 23 October edition carried a special study on the cease-fire resolution. The paper affirms that the Security Council resolution is based on the same principals that Sadat laid out in his 16 October speech. The paper also said that the coming political stage of the "battle" will be just a "ferocious" as the military stages. A Cairo MENA article reiterated the Egyptian stand that the Security Council resolution is based on Israel's complete withdrawal from the occupied territories.

JORDAN

21. In a conversation with Ambassador Scali, Jordanian UN Representative Sharaf expressed Amman's concern over several aspects of the peace proposal. Sharaf said that the "super powers" had clearly reached agreement on matters of vital concern to Jordan without any contribution by Jordan. The Jordanian said his government would like to know whether the UN was considered "appropriate auspices" for negotiations, what would be the roles of the US, the USSR, and the Security Council, whether intermediaries were contemplated for the negotiation process, and what is the US position on territorial changes. Sharaf stressed the importance of a united Arab position in achieving a lasting peace. He noted the difficult position in which Jordan found itself, having accepted the cease-fire while two other "battlefield governments" had not. Sharaf pledged that Jordan would work to bring about a reasonable common position among the Arabs, but reiterated the need to be kept informed of US intentions in order to achieve this.

WORLD REACTION (PRIOR TO BREAKDOWN OF CEASE-FIRE)IRAN

22. The Iranian government announced its support for the cease-fire and expressed hopes that a lasting

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and respectable peace, on the basis of Resolution 242, will be established.

#### CANADA

23. Canadian Foreign Minister Sharp and Canada's four main political parties expressed satisfaction with the turn of events. Sharp said his government was ready to send an additional contingent of Canadian observers to the Middle East if needed, or, if asked, to contribute to the formation of a peace-keeping force in the region under UN auspices.

#### WESTERN EUROPE

24. West German Chancellor Brandt said that the Soviet Union and the US had overcome a threat to their policy of detente. Brandt had earlier said that West Germany was prepared to provide humanitarian aid and economic cooperation to the Middle East countries. The Netherlands greeted the UN resolution "with satisfaction." Osservatore Romano, the voice of the Holy See, also expressed satisfaction with the UN resolution.

#### EASTERN EUROPE

25. The Yugoslav UN representative noted that the cease-fire is linked with the call to start the immediate implementation of Resolution 242 which called for a complete Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories. He rejected the acquisition of territory by force and said that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people were among the fundamental issues at stake and must be recognized and fulfilled.

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26. Polish Communist Party First Secretary Gierok said that the UN resolution offered prospects for a "solution guaranteeing fundamental human rights, a lasting peace, and security for all the nations." Hungarian radio expressed hope that as a result of the cease-fire "the guns will be completely silenced." Budapest seemed to give considerable emphasis to the constructive roles of the US and the Soviet Union and stated that "the policy of detente has stood the test of the first extremely grave crisis."

#### ASIA

27. The Japanese press has generally welcomed the adoption of the Security Council resolution, but voiced concern over how long oil production restrictions by the Arabs would continue. Mainichi carried a statement by Foreign Minister Ohira that the government "wholeheartedly welcomes" the adoption of the resolution and the efforts of the US and the USSR.

28. The South Korean Foreign Ministry welcomed the Middle East cease-fire and expressed hope for the speedy return of a lasting peace in the area. According to FBIS Chinese, North Korean, and Viet Cong media have not responded to the cease-fire. A Philippine government spokesman said that the adoption of UN Resolution 242 was a "necessary step" toward peace in the Middle East and that all UN members should bring their moral authority to bear to secure a permanent peace. A Singapore Government communique said that the UN Resolution was the "only practical and rational solution," and that the fighting showed that a decision could not be imposed by arms. An Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman said that his government welcomed the cease-fire and hoped there would be a lasting peace assuring justice and honor for all nations in the area.

#### LATE ITEM

29. According to a Syrian military spokesman, Israeli aircraft attempted to strafe civilian targets north



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of Damascus city. Reportedly, Syrian planes drove the Israelis off, forcing them to drop their bombs on mountainous areas.

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